Promotion of heritage hotels and heritage tourism

2291. SHRISURENDRALATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to promote heritage hotels and heritage tourism in the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard during last three years State-wise and the assistance extended by the Centre?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRIJAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) During the year 2003-2004, in order to encourage budget accommodation including heritage hotels/heritage tourism in the country, a scheme "Incentive to Accommodation Infrastructure" has been introduced to provide incentives to new approved hotel projects in 1 star to 3 star and heritage basic category except in the 4 metropolitan cities of Delhi Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. The incentives include one time Capital Grant of 10% of the total principal loan payment from designated financial institutions or upto Rs. 25 lakhs to 1 star, Rs. 50 lakhs to 2 star and Rs. 75 lakhs to 3 star and the heritage basic category projects, whichever is less.

Besides, the following incentives are available to promote hotels including heritage hotels:

(i) Expenditure Tax on hotels has been completely withdrawn w.e.f. 1.6.2003.

(ii) Concessions under the Income Tax Act.

(iii) A further extension has been accorded to the hotel industry for exemption of Service Tax.

(iv) Hotel industry has been given the status of infrastructure for some of the incentives. Financial Institutions, which have infrastructure capital funds, will get the incentive under Section 10(23G) of the Income Tax Act for lending to hotels, on teh same lines as availabel to them for lending to other infrastructure sectors. This facility will be available to such Financial Institutions for lendign to 3 stare and above hotels.

(v) Concessional Customs Duty on imports.

(vi) Capital Subsidy to new hotel projects in 1 star to 3 star category and heritage basic category under the scheme of Incentive to Accommodation Infrastructure of the Department of Tourism.

(vii) Free publicity and promotion through publicity material of the Department of Tourism, Government of India and India tourism Offices in India and abroad.

During the last three years the Interest Subsidy granted to all the eligible hotels (State-wise figures are not maintained) including Heritage Hotels under the Interest Subsidy Scheme is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Amount of Interest Subsidy
2000-2001	8.50
2001-2002	9.10
2002-2003	9.00

Development of Spiritual Tourism

2292. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of places of pilgrimage which have been selected for and are being develped as Tourist Centres or Centres of Spiritual tourism;

(b) what is the total outlay under the Tenth five year Plan;

(c) what is the total budgetary allocation since the scheme, including the budget for the current year; and

(d) what are the brief particulars of the schemes sanctioned, schemes completed and of the schmes under implementation at each place?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) Some of the important tourist destinations which have been taken up for development in the Tenth Plan:Ajmer, Pushkar, Hardwar, Raishikesh, Nagarjunasagar, Bodhgaya, Kurukshetra, Tawang, Puri, Kanyakumari, Kamakhya, Dakshineshwar, Mahabilipuram and Hampi. The Development of these places is taken up under the Product/Infrastructure and Destination Development Scheme and Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits scheme.